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Donald Wise

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CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

DON WISE

Smith: The date is November 4, 1996. We are gathered in the teacup room of the alumni office in Barge Hall. The camera operator is Jean Putnam. The interviewer is Milo Smith. The interviewee today is Dr. Donald Wise, Don, would you please give us a nice thumbnail sketch of your autobiography starting with your birth in the manger? (laughs)

Wise: How did you know that?

Smith: Go ahead, shoot.

Wise: I was born in Lodgepole, Nebraska, population 479, seven miles from the Colorado border, 45 miles from the Wyoming border. A glorious place to be in the sand hills. The big city was Denver just down the road a bit through those mountains. A glorious place. I've got goose bumps thinking about my childhood - we just had eight or nine little boys about the same age and a half a dozen little girls and we just had more fun. Can I say more damn fun? We just had - because part of what we did was at Lodgepole Creek which they claim is the longest creek in the world. It starts clear up in the middle of Wyoming comes down and went right through and then my dad bought a little piece of property there so that we could have our dairy cows. The Lodgepole Creek went right through Lodgepole - the tail end here and that's where we learned how to swim, how to dive out of willow trees. We would go up to the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad and get ties, railroad ties and bring them down along with double thickness of pieces of wood that they tightened up railroad cars so they could ship wheat and you can imagine what we could do with those big long thick panels. We made tree houses out of them. We put them on top of the ties and made rafts. It was a glorious place to grow up. It was just marvelous.

Smith: And the date was?

Wise: 7-10-26.

Smith: 7-10-26 Any other children in the family?

Wise: Doyle, a year after me. My brother.

Smith: Brother named?

Wise: Doyle.

Smith: Doyle.

Wise: D-o-y-l-e and Doyle when he was 14 and I was 15 Doyle died.

Smith: How?

Wise: That was as bonafide traumatic experience that I've ever witnessed and certainly that I've ever been a part of.

Smith: Now, did you go to a country school while you lived there?

Wise: No, we had our own Lodgepole schools and Mrs. DeBrunner taught us piano and Mrs. Lindley was the first grade teacher and we had some dandies. We had some marvelous folks. And we'd have 12, 16

folks in class. We were - sometimes I had a boy that would come in from the country and be there with me but most of the time it was Don and these other dozen, 15 girls and it was just glorious. (laughs) It was just so much fun. Leila and Marjorie.

Smith: Now did Lodgepole also - did that school also have a junior high level and a high school level?

Wise: Yes, yes. And I taught at both of those levels later on in my life.

Smith: When did you graduate from high school?

Wise: Oh, for heaven's sakes. Here comes the Alzheimer's. '43? '43.

Smith: Good, good. That was a good year.

Wise: Was that yours? (laughs)

Smith: While you were in high school, Don, what were your major interests outside of all those girls?

Wise: Singing.

Smith: Singing.

Wise: And playing in the band, Singing solos at music contests in the Lodgepole Valley Activities Association included Potter and Gurley and Sidney and we just did everything that every other student did in this country.

Smith: Now among the academics, which appealed to you?

Wise: Probably English.

Smith: Oh?

Wise: I loved history. He's talking academics but I was crazy about football. All of us were and I played one year of 11 man football. That's logical. Played 11 man football against Dalton and Potter and Sidney and all these - then when I got in it they were making a switch into six man and if that wasn't fun. My oh my. Yeah, I loved - and singing. I played the trumpet in the band but boy I got to sing solos. We had a boy's glee club that just knocked the socks off the rest of the members of the Valley League.

Smith: Now might we assume that you went directly on to college?

Wise: Yes, you can assume that.

Smith: From high school graduation?

Wise: Uh huh.

Smith: Where?

Wise: Nebraska Wesleyan. We were Methodists and Nebraska Wesleyan was 400 miles east. The state of Nebraska - I was at one end and Lincoln was at the other and we were Methodists so I went to Nebraska Wesleyan the '43 -'44 school year and then immediately into the Navy. World War II.

Smith: Our Navy?

Wise: Our Navy.

Smith: Well, you certainly continued on to college after you got out of the navy. When was that?

Wise: Well it would have been '44 - '46 and got out in July so that I got home and got all squared away and went to Kearney instead of Nebraska Wesleyan. In the first place, it was a lot closer and my folks had gone to Kearney in the summers. They never had degrees but they both had gone four years so I went to Kearney and played football and sang.

Smith: What was your ranking in the Navy, Don?

Wise: Yeoman Third.

Smith: Yeoman Third. And your duties were what?

Wise: Helping out in an office on a ship. Typing, filing, all the normal things that a secretary does.

Smith: Now after you finished a bachelors degree, what was your progress?

Wise: Well, for one year I went ahead and worked to help pay off some of my debts. We had a marvelous place to do that. Storage - ammunition storage depot 18 miles away at Sidney and I as a lad had helped pour the concrete for these things so it was a big part of our lives, the Sioux Ordinance Depot and so I went out there. It was the logical thing for me to do. There weren't any teaching jobs open and I wasn't going anywhere other than Cheyenne County.

Smith: Now, after you finished paying off all of your debts, I assume you went on to school?

Wise: Oh yeah.

Smith: Where?

Wise: To University of Wyoming and to Kearney. To Kearney I got my masters.

Smith: Oh really?

Wise: Uh huh. It was very much like Central. It was Nebraska's Central.

Smith: And after you completed your masters, what did you do?

Wise: Went ahead and kept teaching and I became more involved in administration.

Smith: At what level were you teaching then?

Wise: High school. Yeah, I was teaching high school all the time.

Smith: And then you moved into high school administration?

Wise: Uh huh.

Smith: Then when did you go back to pursue your doctorate?

Wise: Well, about 12 years of teaching and then I went and - it was wonderful for those us of that had been in the service. I suspect you received help from the government and to go up to Wyoming - Laramie was just a hoot and a holler from Lodgepole in those wonderful mountains and watching those cowboys play university football because I went to school to play football. That was one of the things that I wanted to do and then to get there and become a part of that huge thing after little Kearney like Central and oh, that marching band. When they would come in on that horse that was there. Oh, I just get goose bumps talking about it. It was - it couldn't have been better.

Smith: Good.

Wise: It could not have been better. Wonderful counseling staff to teach. So when I finished up there, got my degree. Right back to Lodgepole as the counselor with my doctorate.

Smith: And then how long did you maintain that position before you went back to pursue your doctorate?

Wise: I had it.

Smith: Oh, you had it?

Wise: Uh huh.

Smith: You got that there?

Wise: Yep.

Smith: A doctorate in ed?

Wise: Uh huh. And so I was at Lodgepole, borrowed money to build a house and the folks at Laramie kept saying, "Don, this is open, this is open, this is open," and finally one opened up that was close enough that we moved and I took that job at that small college much like this one. We could still get home for all the holidays and birthdays. It was out in northern Colorado.

Smith: All right, now, how did you find out that there was a vacancy at Central Washington College of Education or Central Washington State College?

Wise: A book salesman told me. You know, that was one of our primary contacts with the world out there was when the book salesmen came around because we didn't - we didn't do an awful lot of traveling. I would go to the homecoming games at Kearney and about that but then found out that this school out here in Washington was looking for a dean. So I called that night and found out who the dean of students was and called them the next morning. I said, "Is that opening - does it still exist." He said, "Yes, but we've got a person on campus right now that we think is probably the person and we've been interviewing." And I said, "Could I ask you to please call these three people and get some idea about my preparation and I think that I could contribute. Before you go ahead and finish that up, would you please call these three," because I had checked that out with them before hand, you know. The next night this person from out here called and said, "We would like you to fly out and we'll pay your way," and that's it. History.

Smith: Did you find it was a little difficult flying into Ellensburg?

Wise: Well, I was used to that, you know, the flying. We did - we went to the little airport in Sidney 18 miles down the US30 and I just loved it. I come into Yakima and to have some people from the - come on Don - the staff members in student services to come down and get me and then getting to meet all of you folks. I just felt like I was at Kearney. Gee whiz, the football team played the same kind of teams that we played. Some of them the same teams from Montana and that was it.

Smith: Now, do you recall who interviewed you for the position?

Helen: Jim Brooks.

Wise: Jim Brooks was very involved in it.

Helen: Jack Witherspoon.

Wise: Y.T. Witherspoon. Remember him?

Smith: Oh yes.

Wise: And Mary - Mary Belle -

Helen: Roche.

Wise: Roche.

Smith: Oh yes, I'd forgotten her.

Wise: So those were the people.

Helen: And ? was in there.

Wise: Yeah, but he wasn't part of the interviewing team. And then they had a couple of folks from the psych department too that - so I went over and I was interviewed by the psych department.

Smith: Now when you took the position, Don, did you hold rank in the psych department?

Wise: No. I don't think so. No.

Smith: Because administrators did not hold rank in departments for a long time and then finally we started hiring all administrators with rank in some department. I just wondered if you remembered when that happened that you gained -

Wise: Three or four years after I was here.

Smith: Was it?

Wise: And it was grand because obviously I worked with all of them constantly and there were some wonderful folks.

Smith: Good.

Putnam: What year was that? Do you happen to remember when that first year was?

Helen: 1966 in the fall, October.

Putnam: I came the next year.

Wise: Is that right? And I just dearly loved the athletic department here. That was such a huge part of my high school life and undergrad. Music and athletics. Oh what a combination.

Smith: What turned you on to psychology and counseling? Is there a particular prof that you had?

Wise: No, the whole department at the University of Wyoming. They just were fine.

Smith: Good.

Wise: I couldn't have asked for a better program.

Smith: Had you served as a dean at Kearney?

Wise: No.

Smith: No? So this was your first deanship?

Wise: This was my first deanship.

Smith: Did you find it at all frightening? Do you remember?

Wise: No.

Smith: No?

Wise: No, because there were some really fine colleagues on this campus that I met immediately through - some through singing, some through floating the river because I floated the Lodgepole Creek enough that I could talk about it. I just fell in love with this place immediately and I didn't come here to spend the rest of my life. This was a stepping stone to go back to the midwest but no.

Helen: Some early student leaders were very important.

Wise: Oh, my heaven's. We had - we - you remember those wonderful guys that just-

Smith: How about naming some for us?

Wise: I can't.

Smith: Besides Mike McCloud.

Wise: Oh he wasn't a leader at that time. He was a student. You know, he came after I did.

Helen: But student leaders like Ron Simms.

Wise: Oh, Ron Simms.

Smith: Oh yes.

Wise: But Tim

Helen: Tim Wing.

Wise: Tim Wing.

Smith: Yes.

Helen: Boston Hooper.

Wise: Boston Hooper.

Smith: For the camera.

Wise: Austin Cooper but we did like to call him Boston Hooper and he didn't mind that a lot.

Helen: And Denny Hamilton.

Wise: Oh yeah, Denny. And then Jimi, of course. Very involved.

Helen: Jimi who?

Wise: Hamilton. She wasn't Hamilton then but –

Helen: Yes, yes, she was Hamilton. Now she's Vernie.

Wise: Oh, that Jimi.

Smith: Now, in your function as the dean of men, as you think back, what were one or two of the major problems that you had to help young men through?

Wise: One of the major problems was their - their certain belief that they were not going to go to war and living with what that meant they were going to have to do. They were going to have to say some things about belief systems that they didn't really believe but it kept them out of the war - kept them out of the service. I spent lot of time with some magnificent young men and a couple women helping them through that terrible guilt that they were experiencing but we had lots of folks who were in the service.

Smith: Was drinking a problem then, Don?

Helen: There was a drug bust, remember that?

Wise: There was a major drug bust after a couple years because they came in and did it right. They brought in some folks and had them here and they just became part of the campus and when they finally had the bust, they made no mistakes but no, the things that we did to bring outside speakers in and they would go to the residence halls and I was so involved with the residence hall and that was a big part of what was going on with the war.

Helen: It was the Vietnam War.

Wise: The Vietnam War.

Smith: Don, are you aware of any significant changes that you yourself brought about in the function of the dean's office or in counseling that perhaps may still exist today?

Wise: Well, more help and more preparation on the part of the residence hall staff. I - and the student government and then, of course, we had a residence hall government separate from the student government. Do you remember?

Smith: Uh huh.

Wise: And there was the potential for some real problems there and I worked with them. I went to lunch. I had the leaders from both of those groups and we swore to each other that this place is not going to close down a minute. Boy those were powerful times.

Smith: Yes indeed.

Wise: And we never closed a minute and people would come from, you know, other colleagues would come from all over the country and the world sometimes and see that mass of people over in front of the student union were watching - come back from marching downtown and they just could not believe that they also went to class. It was - this place did it as well as any place in the country, I swear.

Smith: Would you venture a guess as to why peace rang quite supreme even during those upheaval days?

Wise: Of course they all had an opportunity to know each other and we talked constantly. We were in Jim Brooks' home - the leaders - the presidents of the residence halls. It was just - we would just dialogue all the time and it - there were never any threats. If some yahoo came in fresh from the U or somewhere and really going to turn this place around, they just didn't get anywhere because it was working here and folks were still going ahead and getting their degrees and then they would come back and be a part of the homecoming stuff. We had some great ones.

Smith: Now Don, do you recall any outside pressures on you as dean of men - outside pressures that tried to influence your decision making?

Wise: Oh yes.

Smith: Would you identify some without mentioning names?

Wise: Community leaders. Community leaders. There were two women and three guys that really wanted to put pressure on and they wanted the place closed or else they wanted some of the leaders removed from the University and it was - there was lots of dialogue, Milo. Believe me.

Smith: Do you recall any time that there was a representative of the ministerial association that came up to meet with you? I had meetings with them all the time.

Wise: Constantly Milo, you know that. Holy cow, such wonderful fellows and some of the women. There were two or three women who were representing some of the churches and they also were faculty members - most of them. They represented both sides but I spoke at the Methodist Church half a dozen times, the Lutheran Church two or three times. The - we had a lot of professors who went to those churches and they wanted their congregations and their friends and colleagues there to know what was going on up here so we had no problems with dialogue. It was a very special place it seems to me because we had no fires. We had no fisticuffs and we never missed a day of school.

Smith: Would you say off hand that this was - this was a short period during which the town and gown relationship was at hazard?

Wise: No, it wasn't at hazard.

Smith: It wasn't at hazard? Good.

Wise: There were sufficient people downtown. The ministers, bless them, who were a part of what we were doing up here and well there were just some good folks downtown.

Smith: Sure.

Wise: That wanted things to go well up here. They would come up and speak in the residence halls if they were invited. We had all kinds of groups and meetings in the residence halls, in the Sub, in the - come on, your hall?

Smith: McConnell.

Wise: McConnell.

Smith: Sure.

Wise: It was almost always positive.

Smith: Good.

Wise: People hugging each other and people crying. I can't imagine a better place than Central Washington State College at that time.

Smith: Don, did you ever have enough time in your daily schedule to participate in any other campus committees?

Wise: Yes.

Smith: Such as?

Wise: Well, I'm trying to think. Yeah, the ed. department had me involved in quite a bit of their stuff because that was my graduate degree. My doctorate was in education from - and my bachelors degree was from Nebraska's Central. Kearney State - I knew what was going on here before I got here because I experienced the whole thing in Nebraska.

Smith: Did you do your homework before you came here? Looking up this school and its record?

Wise: I made phone calls and then I called the University of Wyoming and talked to those people and found out the ones who had been up in this area and knew about - I had all kinds of information about Central and it was all positive and it all reminded me of what I felt about Kearney.

Smith: I even knew how many books were in the University library when I came. Dr. McConnell couldn't believe that anybody would care.

Wise: I went to the library the first day. You see that has been such a huge part of my life. Teaching and certainly reading.

Smith: Let's see, now, as long as floating that lovely river has been so much a part of your life, let's talk about that a little bit. You had floated at home as a child and who introduced you to the Yakima River?

Wise: The student body president took me out the first weekend.

Smith: Which one?

Wise: Well –

Smith: Hamilton?

Wise: No, it was before Denny.

Smith: Before that?

Wise: Yeah, we'd have to look it up.

Smith: It wouldn't have been Ron Simms?

Helen: Was it Tim -Tim Wing.

Smith: Tim Wing could have been.

Wise: No, this guy is a tall - I can't get it but all these other people floated and they had been out there with this guy and he had - a professor had taken him out there. So it was just a matter of a week or two and I had floated the Yakima River and it was all inner tubes in those days.

Smith: Yes, now there was a minimum traffic on the river those days, right, compared especially to a summer Saturday or Sunday?

Wise: Yes.

Smith: I fly fish and I have finally given up fly fishing on Saturdays and Sundays.

Wise: You were one of those, huh?

Smith: I can't find any place to get the fly in the water.

Wise: I thought that we - I thought we got along pretty well. The fly fisherman and the floaters. I thought we kind of honored each other's space.

Smith: Now, because the newspapers have been so full for the last two or three summers with the dangers that the drinking driver is causing in the canyon and that most of the drinking is traceable to floaters, do you recall much trouble at first with the beer bag hanging on the side of the inner tube to keep it cool as you went down the river and then you'd go to shore and you'd tank up on beer? Were there troubles in those years with a lot of accidents as there are now?

Wise: I don't think so and they - they were very very cautious about where they did their drinking. They truly were and immediately we started this ethic of being responsible for the river and picking up and picking up and then there was just a very short time when we started having the formal river cleanup from up here and it just hasn't been a problem. Now and then you'll find a couple - we'll come and find where somebody has dumped their bottles from their own back yard and it, of course, the second we see it it's gone. The whole place is just shiny clean.

Smith: What classes have you taught while on this campus, Don?

Wise: I always was substituting for a colleague that was going somewhere else or was gone for a while but three or four separate psych classes and I got to do two English classes. Oh that was so fine.

Smith: Were you ever drafted to come in and teach counseling classes?

Wise: Oh yeah.

Smith: Which would have been a natural.

Wise: And working with the students that were majoring in counseling - the grad students. It was - yeah, I really enjoyed Central. I enjoyed the faculty. I was blessed enough with getting to meet some people in biology and if you don't think that Klucking and Wiberg couldn't put you in touch with faculty members enjoyed talking about the river.

Helen: The river project at O'Hara -

Wise: Yeah they - Mike McCloud and Pat O'Hara. See, those two guys have gone on to really be special in lots of peoples lives and those two guys who with Kiucking and Wiberg - it would be pretty tough to say no.

Smith: Yes,

Wise: And we always tried to tie some kind of food along with that, There were lots of wonderful wives that helped out on those things. It was miraculous when you -

Putnam: I was going to have you describe because I have heard so much about your dinners that you had down there. Wonderful dinners - I mean, gourmet. Can you kind of describe a couple of the things you had?

Wise: Well, we stopped at various places and we felt awfully good about all of those places but then we heard a rumor that this one little patch - who was the guy that owned that? The restaurateur?

Helen: Stu

Wise: Who was the guy that has all of the -

Smith: Pugney?

Wise: No, this guy is nationally known.

Smith: Anderson? Stuart Anderson?

Wise: Yeah, and he had this one little patch. You get in at Thorp - no, no, you'd get in at Swauk where Swauk comes in - that little parking lot there. That's where we started and we would float around two corners and to your right there was a flat piece, six acres and so we would stop there and do a lot of our cooking and we just about - don't think there were a handful of times that we didn't cook. We took -

Putnam: What were some of your menus?

Wise: Oh my, Helen just happens to have a couple here.

Helen: This is the one for the Council of Presidents floating.

Wise: Okay, Jim Brooks.

Helen: No, this is Garitty.

Wise: Is this Garitty? Okay. The Swauk Council of Presidents float in 1983, May 25th. This is all his colleagues. Swauk Creek stirrup cup before they got in their rafts. A stirrup cup of morning glories. Are you familiar with morning glories?

Putnam: Uh huh.

Wise: And then to Oak Island and that's around the first corner. Oak Island.

Helen: Or second.

Wise: Okay, but before you got to the property so it wasn't very long and you just went around and got out to the right there and the rocks went up. You could look across the highway over there and on Oak Island we had apple walnut pate, Kagmok, eggplant caviar, toasted bread rounds, champagne and then we decided that we would go for our next course to Scott's Park. That's my son, Scott. We named this next little place which was our - is that our property?

Mrs. Wife: That's our property.

Wise: That's our property. It wasn't at that time. Caesar salad, sauteed mushrooms, supremes with scotch cream, toasted river crescents, broiled sirloin with bordelaise sauce, sour dough hard rolls, white mountain ice cream. The wine was?.

Helen: Read who was there.

Wise: Okay. Joanne and Bob Carr, Nancy and Dan Evans, Virginia and Don Garitty, and something Gerberding (the president), Lou and Don Guy, Shirley and Wendel Hill, Gary Ristine, Dean Tonseth, Helen and Don Wise. Now Gary and Wendell and Dean and I were the ones that handled the rafts along with the cooking. Now Dean, you know where he lives? Okay, you go out highway 10, Hayward Hill on your right, grab a left and go down over the bridge - okay, you go around the next corner - you're still right there with the hill and look down and that's where Dean Tonseth. He has that -

Smith: Oh that's Tonseth down there?

Wise: That's Dean Tonseth's. Wonderful how - and he just -

Helen: And the property is right there.

Wise: Oh yeah, and our property is just across the river. Tight little community.

Smith: Now has anything of any significance, Don, ever taken place on that property?

Wise: Well, I don't know whether Dixie being out there. There was a wedding.

Smith: Oh there was a wedding there?

Wise: Uh huh.

Smith: Oh, some kind of a ceremony it was?

Helen: That was at the Tonseth's that we had the wedding and then the honeymoon was right there.

Wise: The honeymoon and the people came over and it was - oh. It's a sacred spot. I think that's the best word.

Putnam: Now you mentioned Dixie, who's Dixie?

Wise: Dixie Lee.

Putnam: Dixie Lee Ray and she was?

Wise: The Governor.

Putnam: The Governor at the time.

Wise: Uh huh. And she had a sister that was an absolute honey bunch and this sister just tagged along and I know that Dixie felt okay about it but those two women - don't know how many times they must have floated. They got to the place where they were comfortable and calling up and saying, "This weekend could we bring and float down to the property. We'll bring the food."

Putnam: She had two dogs, didn't she?

Wise: Oh yeah.

Putnam: Did they go along with her?

Wise: Yes. She had the time of her life.

Putnam: Sounds like it.

Wise: Oh yeah, I don't know when we started that. I can't remember the first time that we did it but one of the things that we did there - we were always looking for the right kind of sticks for doing the meat and stuff. We didn't like to take any more of that metal out there that we could help but we left it immaculate. I mean it was immaculate from the second or third time we were there and if we ran out there now it - so we were looking for different ways of cooking meat.

Helen: What does this have to do with witching?

Wise: Oh, you're wanting the witching water and booze, you know. We started doing that just for ourselves and then the first guests we did it for was Dixie and her sister and then a state patrolman that drove them around got to be a part of it and we acted as if we were out of the woods. Hadn't been there more than an hour and we were out and of course we had all done this preparing before and so these three were really watching. We got a branch out of the tree and put a point on it and got these two handles and then we were walking around witching and all of a sudden it was just jumping. A couple of the women got down on their hands and knees and started digging and what do you suspect they found - these marvelous bottles of wine and Dixie to this day I'll bet you she and her sister talk about it because it was this special wine. You don't expect if you don't know the Ellensburg Greys.

Smith: When did you start the early February float, Don, with the ice still on the river? Do you recall? Was it shortly after that period?

Wise: Yeah, and the thing was that we had picnics out there - large picnics and they were a lot of them and Tonseth's where Tonseth is now and so we decided that we would start having that with the lamb on the spit and everything at the property and so we- they had to have places to leave some wine so we walked clear down to the old original stopping spot there on our property and we had three places. One of them was just as you'd come around the corner with big high rocks as you're coming into the property, We had three places that we had stashed wine. Had a shovel, dug a hole in the ground, put a bottle or two of wine in there and covered them up. Put a couple of rocks - big rocks.

Helen: The peace and gourmet floats started what about 25 to 30 years ago?

Wise: Yeah, they were a part of all of that stuff.

Helen: They called it peace –

Wise: Peace and gourmet and that was in conjunction with Vietnam. Terrible stuff so we called them the peace and gourmet floats and people brought the best stuff that they could conceive of to share. Wonderful, wonderful things.

Smith: You know, of course, that many of us who have participated in that upon telling our friends about it they think we're absolutely insane when I had told them that sometimes there is so much ice on the edge of the river that we can't get the rafts to shore and we have to walk across the ice and they can't imagine being out there floating a river with ice on it. Absolutely lovely.

Wise: And we - we just try to contribute to that frame of mind as much as we can because we don't need any more. We don't want any more. And we decided we want to take out our son's new fiancé, for instance.

Smith: All right, now that you mention it, did Scott ever go to school at Central?

Wise: Scott got his degree at Central.

Helen: In law and justice.

Wise: In law and justice and he's working for the state.

Smith: You do have a daughter too, don't you?

Wise: Oh we have - I have three.

Helen: Two now.

Wise: Cathy is a teacher and her husband is a principal out at Mt. Stuart.

Smith: Did she go to school here?

Wise: Oh yes, all of them did. And then Judy, she went to school here and got her degree and she's down in Benton City with her children and her husband.

Helen: He got his degree here too.

Wise: Scott got his and Judy –

(tape ran out)

Smith: ...made it from Central.

Wise: Cathy is the oldest and Cathy has her bachelors and her masters from

Central and is out at Valley View Elementary where she is a first grade?

Helen: Second grade.

Wise: Second grade teacher and she is married to Gary who - they met on the river and Gary's family moved from Nebraska so we knew about that and then he was in the service and I got to know him on campus and then those two became a couple so Gary has been on it for almost as long as I have - a couple years. And then Cath, of course. And then the second child was Vicky Jo who was born a year or two after Cath

- born with cerebral palsy and severely mentally retarded and Vicky passed away about a year and a half ago. She spent the last 15 years in a group home in Nebraska. See that was our home state and our folks in Nebraska bless their hearts.

Smith: Quickly run down through Scott.

Wise: First there's Judy, daughter Judy who was after Vik and she's teaching down in Benton City and her husband graduated from here, Rick, and played basketball here and so their three children are going to Benton City and we get to be with them a lot when they get up here and then Scott is the last one and Scott got his degree and he has been working for the state transporting juveniles for how long? Anyway, Scott is doing well. He's on - he's not married now is he?

Helen: No.

Wise: He's been divorced for quite a while but he sure brought a neat new lady here last week. The kids are all around and they love Central. We really have tight relationships with Central other than just Helen and I.

Smith: Now, thinking back to your days as dean, Don, let's name some people whom you would identify as being especially supportive of your work?

Wise: Well, I have Milo Smith in the top and the folks up in your area, my goodness me, what a help.

Smith: Name it for the camera.

Putnam: Are you talking about the coaches?

Wise: I'm talking about all of them.

Putnam: We had Parry and Dean Nicholson.

Wise: But you women were really special because we had a lot of students that would like to do that and all of the sudden here they had these magnificent models to talk with, observe and so -

Helen: And the counseling center.

Wise: Well the counseling center, that's what I got my doctorate in and then this just was so demanding on my time but it was - I felt that I was producing, that I was a part of the campus more than I would have been if I would have been up there and it just worked out.

Helen: Wells?

Wise: Wells and I both got our doctorates at the University of Wyoming and so

Wells and I just have been together so much. We had a tight little group at the

University of Wyoming.

Smith: Now Don, among your superiors whom you answered to who was especially supportive?

Wise: I'd have to put Jim Brooks right up there at the top.

Smith: Good.

Helen: Don Garitty.

Wise: Oh Don Garitty, yeah.

Mrs. Wise: And Don Guy.

Wise: Don Guy. All of those presidents because we did a lot of stuff with the presidents and their colleagues and other presidents and guests and they just got such a kick out of taking those new friends and colleagues to the river and showing them and we always had to have a couple bottles buried, you know. That was quite a deal.

Helen: Did you mention Owen Dugmore?

Wise: Owen Dugmore in the counseling center. Did you know Owen?

Putnam: I didn't know him well.

Wise: Just one of the finest human beings. Yeah, we had - there were some

marvelous folks up there. I just felt so good about that when I was a dean and then I

wanted to go back -

Smith: Don, would you now identify for us any recognitions that you were given in all those years you spent here on campus in active duty? Awards, recognitions, honors? Don't be modest.

Wise: Well, I'm trying to think.

Helen: You got an award, I'm trying to think, from the governor for the river clean

up for environmental statewide environmental, I don't know.

Wise: Yeah, we had a lot of close interaction with governors because they came over and also the presidents have all been there. The chair of the faculty senate, goodness me. It's been - it's a tight wonderful little place, our Central is.

Smith: Well as an observer Don, I would have to list what I would consider the greatest honor that you've ever received is the love of all the people that have worked with you and for you.

Wise: Oh Milo, thank you. God, this has been so wonderful. It's nice and all of get to be here.

Smith: One would get the idea that you've been happy here. (laughs)

Wise: Happy, challenged. Boy oh boy to get through that Vietnam thing.

Smith: Oh yes.

Wise: That was -

Putnam: Do you want to - yeah I wanted to get that in there too.

Smith: Let's give it a try - let's see what we get from that -

Putnam: Now when you retired, what year was that?

Helen: 1990

Putnam: 1990. Don can you turn that around. I'm - we're just going to see if we can focus in on that.

Wise: Do you want me to get a little closer?

Putnam: No, I'm going to - okay.

Wise: There's a high school picture there, Milo.

Smith: Nobody was ever that young.

Wise: And Dixie. And then when she brought her sister over one time, well that was it. Those too just came back and brought friends and we would stop and eat on the property.

Helen: That was from your retirement, right?

Wise: Yeah, they had this made up for the retirement party. High school, Milo.

It, you know, I have been incredibly blessed. That means that I also experienced some grief and pain.

Smith: Certainly.

Wise: You don't exist in this world without that but -

Smith: I think that's the one thing that I dislike about being of retirement age in that I am constantly losing dear friends - faculty and townspeople and one of these days they'll lose me but of course that I suppose is why we're living so that we can meet that one also.

Wise: I've sure tried to live just as rich and full -

Smith: You're doing very well.

Wise: It's time, Milo.

Smith: What would you like to add to anything that we have talked about this morning. I'm going to close up the questions and simply ask you as you think back, now imagine for a moment that 30, 40, 50 years from now people want to know about what this campus was like in this day that we have been functioning in it, what do you want to tell those people about Central Washington University and about the times in which we lived?

Wise: Well, they - Central Washington University stayed together. It was a highly productive place all the way through some terrible tragic times with our country and I think that everybody that has been here has been proud to be a part of Central and to - and proud of their degrees and their departments and they come back and speak to their profs and speak to professor's classes and share. It sounds a little hokey but there is a strain of a family going on with Central and the people who make up Central from the custodians to the presidents.

Smith: Well having just lived through another homecoming weekend I think we can all appreciate how much this school means to an awful lot of people who take the time to drive those miles and put out the money to come back at homecoming time and how many of them take the time to look us up to say hello.

Wise: Yes.

Smith: It's one of the magical parts of being part of the school.

Wise: Well and being an educator.

Smith: Sure. Anything else you'd like to tell us, Don.

Wise: No, except that I'm happy.

Smith: I think you like poetry also, don't you?

Wise: When I'm not wishing I could find it. "The unicorn. I wish all my old friends knew each other. The very least they deserve is the pleasure of each other's company. We go down by the river and the rocks would hum with this rich collection of men and women. I would smile saying nothing with a bottle of beer in my hand and a small life ? banging in my heart."